

HE WAS A YOUNG EARNEST MUSICIAN AND FOUND IT HARD ENOUGH TO MAKE ENDS MEET. THEN HE LEARN'T A FEW TRICKS FOR THE MUSIC-HALL STAGE, AND THIS DEVELOPMENT OF HIS ART BROUGHT HIM AFFLUENCE.

CHARIVARIA.

THE Welsh are now demanding that Home Rule shall not have precedence of Welsh Disestablishment. We do not think that they have any real cause for alarm.

The Divorce Commission is puzzled how to raise funds to make Divorce cheaper. It seems to us that there are simple means at hand to ensure an enormous revenue. Why not forbid the publication in the newspapers of reports of Divorce cases, and let the Divorce Court issue its own journal? In the present state of the public literary taste such a venture would be an assured success.

The Council of the University of Cambridge proposes to grant the degree of B.A. for £1. Oxford University, we take it, will now consider whether it cannot supply as good an article at 19/11½.

The Parisian Press is annoyed with the English and American Press for having published exaggerated accounts of the flood. Fortunately, however,

there has not as yet been any considerable expression of annoyance with the English and American donations to the Relief Fund which flowed in as a result of such exaggeration.

With reference to the *Dreadnought* hoax, Mr. McKENNA refused to answer Captain FABER's enquiry as to whether the officers bought white kid gloves for the occasion. The question of colour may be in doubt, but the officers were unquestionably kidded.

There is, we hear, much heart-burning among living bards over the forthcoming dinner to the descendants of famous poets. The former complain that they are much more in need of a good dinner than the latter, many of whom are engaged in remunerative professions.

It has leaked out that the next pantomime at the Lyceum is to be *Cinderella*, and the manager trusts that no rival will appropriate the idea.

Mr. BERNARD SHAW has been complaining that the progress of his *Misalliance* was continually interrupted by the

laughter of the audience. This is his typical egoism. He is not interested in the case of those who through the same heartless behaviour were exposed to the horrors of insomnia.

The Rev. F. DORMER PIERCE, Vicar of Southend, has announced his intention of giving a wedding present to each couple married at his church. This idea of a consolation prize for matrimony does credit to Mr. PIERCE's kindly heart.

The fashion of wearing veils which give one the appearance of having a dirty mark on the face is making headway among those who, curiously enough, belong to the very sex which is trying to convince us that its intellectual qualifications entitle it to a vote.

The problem of Monarchs out of business becomes more grave every day, and there is talk of a forthcoming Congress between the ex-SULTAN, the ex-SHAH, and the ex-LAMA to discuss the situation with a view to combined action of some sort. It is thought that the institution of a Royal Labour Exchange would be as useful as anything.

MILK FOR BABES.

To the Parliamentary Correspondent of "The Daily Chronicle."

[Commenting on the suggestion of Lord HUGH CECIL that in order to check the present criminal waste of the nation's money a resolution might at least be passed legalising the collection of income-tax, the Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Daily Chronicle* makes the following observation:—"If the Conservative party had its way the House of Commons would soon be shorn of all its noblest attributes. The old sentiment of pride in the House of Commons seems to have perished in Tory bosoms."]

STERN moralist, the guide of those in sore doubt!
Luminous sign-post on the tricky way!
But for whose counsels, liberally poured out,
Our feet infallibly would walk astray—
Surely in your above remarks, dear Sir,
Surely, for once, you err.

Those "noble attributes" that make the glory
Of the great Commons—there are still a few
Which even he, the tough and hardened Tory,
Treats with as much respect as even you;
Of which if Parliament were shorn (or sheared)
His bosom would be queered.

One such there is, conspicuous for its beauty,
Which, with your kind permission, I will name:
It is the high, imperious sense of duty
Which calls on Governments to play the game;
Especially to see at any cost
That Budgets don't get lost.

You'll tell me how the Peers (those bloated nincom-
poops) are to blame for England's empty chest;
Theirs the unique offence if dues on income
Remain in people's pockets by request;
And May still finds us gathering, in arrears,
The nuts of yesteryear.

I know that parrot-whoeeze: it sounds familiar;
At first it seemed a fairly poignant cry,
But, growing sillier by degrees and sillier
As, week by wasted week, the time goes by,
To-day its credit, always rather small,
Is less than none at all.

Twelve months, by customary computation,
Make up a year. One on the polls was spent,
After some six required for explanation
Of what the Budget actually meant;
But where the rest have gone, or hope to go—
That's what I want to know.

My brother-journalist, I shall be happy
To wait your answer; meanwhile let me hint—
Since "noble attributes" are on the tapis—
How I adore simplicity in print;
How well I like your trust, profound, immense,
In others' innocence.

But oh, beware! The nation's not so guileless;
This England, whom you take to be a fool,
Prefers to have her teaching in a style less
Adapted to an unweaned infants' school;
She's getting quite a big girl now, and knows
Far more than you suppose.

O. S.

"If retreat is impossible for the Ministry, it now obviously is hardly less easy for the Nationalist leader."—*The Scotsman*.
Hardly; in fact we cannot imagine anything less easy to perform than an impossibility.

BIRD CULTS.

["Maeterlinck's poetic idea of *The Blue Bird for Happiness* has been taken up by a number of clever and well-known women in the worlds of Literature, Music and Art, who have banded themselves together into a Dining Club with one object, the Pursuit of Happiness.

The rites and ceremonies practised by the 'Blue Birds' at their meetings are kept a profound secret.

The membership is strictly limited in number, and no man is permitted to join this feminine freemasonry."

Circular Letter from Haymarket Theatre.]

Mr. Punch is very happy to be able to announce that the Blue Birds are not to be alone. Already plans are afoot for rapidly forming a band of the best gushers among the women in London society, to be known as the Pink Geese, who will devote their too considerable leisure to the promotion of Sloppiness. This they will seek and foster in whatever sphere they may find it, whether music, literature, the drama, or the social circle. The name of the president of the Pink Geese is at present, like all their rites and ceremonies, a profound secret, but doubtless it will be revealed in time.

News comes also of the Green Owls, a society of learned ladies who are banded together in a league for the acquirement of culture, or, in other words, Fra Lippo Lippiness. Where they meet no one outside the charmed circle knows, but you may tell them by their jargon.

Another coterie of a most exclusive and esoteric type is that of the Purple Pipits, formed into a luncheon club with the sole aim of cultivating abject Pipiness. Each member is bound by the rules of the society to bring her own pipkin to lunch, at which pipless oranges form a regular feature. The members are divided into two grades, known as the Pipians and the Quipians, following the terminology of CAYLEY, and a variety of quaint ceremonies are practised at their meetings.

Latest advices from Mayfair describe the foundation by a number of brainy and well-bred girls of a charming Association called the White Wagtails, who will concentrate their brilliant talents on the diffusion of unutterable Waggishness. Animated by a beautiful altruism they will not seek to consume their own gaiety, but are resolved to communicate it as widely as possible to all classes of the public.

As a protest against the levity of the White Wagtails, several leading Society women have formed a Club to be known as the Magenta Magpies. The prime object of this confraternity is the pursuit of Magpiety, and their rites are of a deeply devotional character. The name of the Grand Mistress of the Magenta Magpies has not yet been revealed, but it is rumoured that she and her troupe will shortly appear on the boards of a West-End Theatre in order to collect funds for the education of destitute twins in the mysteries of the two-step.

In view of the incalculable value of deportment in modern life, great satisfaction is felt at the public-spirited action of the ladies who have organised a Dining Club under the inspiring title of the Fiery Flamingoes. It is their purpose to cultivate a euppeptic condition by making it a rule to eat standing on one leg. This beautiful idea has met with the cordial support of the authoress of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, who has kindly consented to act as Patroness of the society.

Lastly, we may note the formation of the Incorporated Society of Iridescent Ibises. This is a body expressly devoted to the interests of young girls, and according to the prospectus will make a point of encouraging Flappiness in every form.

"The birthrate shows a steady decline, that for last year being 13.6 per head."—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*.

What must the family have been in the good old days?



SUPPLANTED.

LIBERAL PARTY. "ISN'T HE A BEAUTY!"

BUDGET. "BOO-HOO! THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID OF ME—ONCE!"



VENUS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

Fair Française. "IS IT PERMITTED TO MAKE THE TOUR OF YOUR BEAUTIFUL VESSEL?"
Midshipman (after getting his breath back). "RA-THER!"

THE MANLY MONTH.

O MARCH, when the hurricanes hurtle,
 And hares are incurably mad,
 And resuming the bayleaf or myrtle
 The bardlet is almost as bad,
 My spirit is thrumming
 (I knew it was coming),
 I am prompted to toot like a turtle,
 To warble, egad!

For the spring is arriving in flashes,
 The torrents are heard from afar,
 And the soil has come out into rashes
 In beds where the crocuses are;
 All Nature rejoices
 With murmurous voices
 And suburbs resound with the crashes
 Of nasal catarrh.

But I chiefly delight in the splendour,
 O March, of your breezy caress
 When some creature of feminine gender,
 With hat all awry, and a tress
 Coming down o'er her fore-
 head,
 Remarks, "This is horrid—"

(Of course I don't like to offend her
 And so I say, "Yes.")

But I know that these charmers who revel
 In snubbing our sex if they can—
 So soon as the storm winds dishevel
 Their skirts and the orderly plan
 Of their flounces and "you
 knows,"

They cease to be Junos
 And sink to a far lower level
 Than lubberly man.

They may beat us in brains and in
 muscles

On morns that are smiling and fair,
 But not when old Æolus hustles
 The tempests around in his lair;
 I take it serenely,
 But Dora the queenly
 Is fighting with furious tussles
 Her frills and her hair.

So, whatever betide in the garden,
 O month of the War God, be grim;
 Your blows unrelentingly harden
 And prove to my lady whose whim

Inspires her to flout me,
 She's scarcely without me
 A leg to stand up on—(her pardon,
 I should say, "a limb"). EVOE.

"So the zealous woman put the tracts in a
 box near the refreshment bar, and added a card
 with the words, 'Please take one.' A waggish
 sailor transferred the card to a dish of jam
 tarts. The moment the sailors rushed into the
 bar for dinner they saw the card 'Please take
 one,' and speedily cleared the plate of tarts!
 The incident shows how adroit one must be in
 this work."—*The Young Woman.*

Yes, one never loses anything by being
 one of the first to rush into the bar for
 dinner.

"Gymnastics, Dancing, Games, Swimming,
 Anatomy, Hygiene. Students introduced to
 posts."—*Manchester Guardian.*

But it must be very dull dancing with
 a post.

Tragedies in Brief.

From *The Statesman* birth column:

"JORDAN—To Mr. and Mrs. Jordan, Jharsu-
 gada, on the 20th, yet another (s.o.)."

THE COMING OF THE CROCUS.

"It's a bootiful day again, Sir," said my gardener, James, looking in at the study window.

"Bootiful, James, bootiful," I said, as I went on with my work.

"You might almost say as Spring was here at last, like."

"Cross your fingers quickly, James, and touch wood. Look here, I'll be out in a minute and give you some orders, but I'm very busy just now."

"Thought you'd like to know there's eleven crocuses in the front garden."

"Then send them away—we've got nothing for them."

"Crocuses," shouted James.

I jumped up eagerly, and climbed through the window.

"My dear man," I said, shaking him warmly by the hand, "this is indeed a day. Crocuses! And in the front gar—on the South lawn! Let us go and gaze at them."

There they were—eleven of them. Six golden ones, four white, and a little mauve chap.

"This is a triumph for you, James. It's wonderful. Has anything like this ever happened to you before?"

"There'll be some more up to-morrow, I won't say as not."

"Those really are growing, are they? You haven't been pushing them in from the top? They were actually born on the estate?"

"There'll be a fine one in the back bed soon," said James proudly.

"In the back—my dear James! In the spare bed on the North-east terrace, I suppose you mean. And what have we in the Dutch Ornamental Garden?"

"If I has to look after ornamental gardens and South aspics and all, I ought to have my salary raised," said James, still harping on his one grievance.

"By all means raise some celery," I said coldly. "Take a spade and raise some for lunch. I shall be only too delighted."

"This here isn't the season for celery, as you know well. This here's the season for crocuses, as anyone can see if they use their eyes."

"James, you're right. Forgive me. It is no day for quarrelling."

It was no day for working either. The sun shone upon the close-cropped green of the deer park, the sky was blue above the rose garden, in the tapioca grove a thrush was singing. I walked up and down my estate and drank in the good fresh air.

"James!" I called to my head gardener.

"What is it now?" he grumbled.

"Are there no daffodils, to take the winds of March with beauty?"

"There's these eleven croc—"

"But there should be daffodils, too. Is not this March?"

"It may be March, but 'tisn't the time for daffodils—not on three shillings a week."

"Do you only get three shillings a week? I thought it was three shillings an hour."

"Likely an hour!"

"Ah well, I knew it was three shillings. Do you know, James, in the Scilly Islands there are fields and fields and fields of nodding daffodils out now."

"Lor!" said James.

"Did you say 'lor' or 'liar'?" I asked suspiciously.

"To think of that now," said James cautiously.

He wandered off to the tapioca grove, leant against it in thought for a moment, and came back to me.

"What's wrong with this little bit of garden—this here park," he began, "is the soil. It's no soil for daffodils. Now what daffodils like is clay."

"Then for heaven's sake get them some clay. Spare no expense. Get them anything they fancy."

"It's too alloovial—that's what's the matter. Too alloovial. Now crocuses like a bit of alloovial. That's where you have it."

The matter with James is that he hasn't enough work to do. The rest of the staff is so busily employed that it is hardly ever visible. William, for instance, is occupied entirely with what I might call the poultry; it is his duty, in fact, to see that there are always enough ants' eggs for the goldfish. All these prize Leghorns you hear about are the merest novices compared with William's *protégées*. Then John looks after the stagery; Henry works the coloured fountain; and Peter paints the peacocks' tails. This keeps them all busy, but James is for ever hanging about.

"Almost seems as if they were yooman," he said, as we stood and listened to the rooks.

"Oh, are you there, James? It's a beautiful day. Who said that first? I believe you did."

"Them there rooks always make a place seem so home-like. Rooks and crocuses, I say; and you don't want anything more."

"Yes; well, if the rooks want to build in the raspberry canes this year, let them, James. Don't be inhospitable."

"Course, some do like to see primroses, I don't say. But—"

"Primroses—I knew there was something. Where are they?"

"It's too early for them," said James hastily. "You won't get primroses now before April."

"Don't say 'now,' as if it were my

fault. Why didn't you plant them earlier? I don't believe you know any of the tricks of your profession, James. You never seem to graft anything or prune anything, and I'm sure you don't know how to cut a slip. James, why don't you prune more? Prune now—I should like to watch you. Where's your pruning-hook? You can't possibly do it with a rake."

James spends most of his day with a rake—sometimes leaning on it, sometimes working with it. The beds are always beautifully kept. Only the most hardy annual would dare to poke its head up and spoil the smooth appearance of the soil. For those who like circles and rectangles of unrelieved brown, James is undoubtedly the man.

As I stood in the sun I had a brilliant idea.

"James," I said, "we'll mark the croquet lawn this afternoon."

"You can't play croquet to-day, it's not warm enough."

"I don't pay you to argue, but to obey. At the same time I should like to point out that I never said I was going to play croquet. I said that we, meaning you, would mark the lawn."

"What's the good of that?"

"Why, to encourage the wonderful day, of course. Where is your gratitude, man? Don't you want to do something to help? How can we let a day like this go past without some word of welcome? Out with the marker and the mower, and let us hail the passing of winter."

James looked at me in disgust.

"Gratitude!" he said indignantly to heaven. "And there's my eleven crocuses in the front all a-singing together like anything on three bob a week!"

A. A. M.

"This may not seem much when we have a Budget of £162,000,000, but many a pickle makes a muckle."—*Daily Telegraph*.

This solves the domestic problem—what to do with your spare gherkins.

"There was an awful whirl of waters, a rushing and a roaring, a vacuum in the raging sea—and then, nothing!"—*Daily Mirror Serial*. The shock of coming across nothing, just after meeting a vacuum, would be intense.

From a poster—

EXPERIMENTAL MARRIAGES.
THIRD TEST MATCH.

After the third you would know more or less whether it suited you.

"We shall get to know," Mr. Lloyd George argued persuasively (and the Prime Minister nodded his head behind) "whether the Lords approve our plan."—*Yorkshire Post*.

Mr. ASQUITH seems to be an all-round man.



Country Mouse. "YOU SEE, WE'VE STARTED AN EGG DEPOT, AND WE'RE DOING THE THING THOROUGHLY."
 Town Mouse. "OH, THAT'S IT. IS IT? I THOUGHT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE CHANTECLER CRAZE."
 Country Mouse. "OH, NO! WE HAVEN'T HEARD OF THAT YET."

MR. PUNCH'S REPERTORY THEATRE.

No. II.—MAJOR MANIFOLD'S MARRIAGE.

MAJOR AUGUSTUS MANIFOLD, *late of the Indian Army.*CAPTAIN HENRY WIGRAM, *31st Hussars.*

JOHN BONAMY, M.D.

THE RIGHT HON. THOMAS VANDELEUR, M.P., *Secretary of State for the Home Department.*MRS. MANIFOLD, *Major Manifold's Wife.*ALTHEA MANIFOLD, *Major Manifold's Sister.**[The stage-directions and descriptions are taken, in a reduced form, from the printed book of the play.]*

ACT I.

A December night in the County of Bucks, some thirty-five miles from London. It is an agricultural district dominated by the village of Arden Constable, which in its turn is dominated by Arden Court, Major Manifold's residence, a red brick building in the Georgian style, situated in a park of a hundred acres, and approached by an avenue of elms now swaying and creaking in the December storm. It is 11 o'clock, and the ladies have just retired, ostensibly to bed, from the drawing-room, while the men have filtered into the Major's smoking-room. This room is brilliantly lit with electric light. On its walls are arranged the ferocious heads of buffaloes, hippopotami, moose, tigers and giraffes, formerly alive in various African or Asiatic solitudes, but now consigned by Major Manifold's rifle and the art of the taxidermist to an indefinite period of dead and glassy contemplation. Major Manifold is standing by a table of spirit decanters and siphons of soda-water. He is a man of forty-two, with a grizzled moustache, a bald head, an aquiline nose and a chin denoting a weak sort of obstinacy. Captain Wigram is sitting in an arm-chair. He may be thirty years old, and has the unintellectual air of trifling decision ordinarily associated with a mounted military career, a pink complexion, a heavy fair moustache and thin blond hair irreproachably parted. Mr. Vandeleur has loose lips and dark whiskers, and is about fifty-three. He is standing in an aggressive attitude in front of the fire as though he were crushing a member of the Labour Party by quoting statistics from a Blue Book. Dr. Bonamy, a distinguished specialist in nerve troubles, is clean-shaven and abrupt. He appears to be perpetually on the watch for symptoms, and is in good athletic condition in spite of his sixty years. He is in another armchair.

Manifold. Whisky-and-soda for you, Wigram. Here you are (he hands it to him). What's your mixture, Vandeleur?

Vandeleur. Just the least touch of whisky in hot water.

Manifold (heartily). Oh, come. That won't do here. No temperance men here, you know. Must give you two fingers of whisky at least. (He gives him the steaming mixture.) Bonamy, what do you say?

Bonamy. Soda neat, please.

Manifold. That's easily done. You doctors have to keep your hands steady, I suppose. It's a curious thing, though. I never stinted myself in liquor and my hand's always as steady as a rock. Good constitution, I suppose.

Bonamy (significantly). Ah!

[Wigram looks earnestly at Bonamy, who, unseen by Manifold, taps his shirt front in the region over the heart.]

Wigram (aside to Bonamy). Bad case?

[Bonamy shakes his head.]

Manifold. There now, you're all provided, and we can have a good talk before we turn in.

[He makes for an armchair and prepares to sit down in it. As he does so he gives a sharp exclamation of pain.]

Bonamy. What's the matter?

Manifold. Nothing, nothing. A mere touch of rheumatism in the shoulder-blade. My old wound, you know. I shall have to get you to overhaul me, Bonamy. We're none of us so young as we were. That's the sort of thing you begin to find out when you come to my age.

Vandeleur. Pooh, pooh. What's all this talk about age? You're a mere boy, Manifold, a mere boy. Personally, I think we ought to pass an Act forbidding a man to marry before he's forty. A man under that age hasn't lived.

Bonamy. Why not forbid it altogether at any age? You'd save any amount of unhappiness.

Wigram. Hear, hear. It's a mug's game—saving your presence, of course, Manifold—I mean it's no manner of use to a fellow who's got all his life in front of him. There's a chap I know in the Bays, a youngster of twenty-five, got married a year ago, and now he's the father of twins. Well, there he is, you know. How's he going to get any hunting or shooting or anything? He's done, I tell you.

Manifold. Nonsense, Wigram. I can't listen to that sort of cynical talk. A man isn't a man until he's married. I thought I knew a lot, and I was always laying down the law, just like Wigram, but I give you my word of honour I was a mere fool.

Wigram. Freedom for me.

Manifold. Now that's just where you're wrong. It isn't until a man's married that he knows what freedom really is. Take my own case—

[At this moment the door of the smoking-room opens, and Mrs. Manifold and Althea Manifold come in. An air of gentlemanly surprise and pained discomfort settles upon the male occupants of the room, who all get up from their chairs. Mrs. Manifold is dressed in a pink frock, cut low. She has a good deal of fair fluffy hair, is thirty years young, and frequently pouts at her husband. Althea is dark-haired, dark-eyed and stormy-looking. She is twenty-six, and is Major Manifold's sister by the second marriage of their father, Lord Justice Manifold, now deceased.]

Manifold (after a few moments of blankness). Why, my dear, I thought you'd gone to bed. What brings you here?

Mrs. Manifold. Oh, sit down all of you, do. We're not going to stay. We thought we'd give you a pleasant little surprise, didn't we, Althea? Oh, do sit down. It's perfectly awful to see you all standing up like statues. (They sit down with an appearance of great reluctance and under protest.) The fact is, Augustus, I've come for you (she pirouettes across the room and seats herself lightly on Major Manifold's knee). There now. Here I stay until you agree to come. You're not well, you know, and the worst thing you can do is to sit up. Captain Wigram (she looks archly at him), you must help me in this.

Wigram. Haw, delighted, 'pon my honour. Do anything I can. (Aside to himself) Shall have to take care, by Jove, or poor old Manifold will go off the hooks, and then she'll make me marry her. (Aloud to Althea) Anything I can do for you, Miss Manifold?

[Eventually Manifold is captured and carried off by the two ladies. The other men remain and for half an hour more continue to discuss marriage with greater freedom and less responsibility. In Act II, this discussion is taken up again, and in Act III., Manifold being now a very sick man in a red dressing gown and carpet slippers, it is still continued, to the increasing discomfort of Captain Wigram, who has become more and more heavily involved with both ladies. Nothing, however, happens, and thus the play ends.]

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE.

THE Parliamentary Correspondent of *The Daily News*, writing of a recent debate, said, "The cheer that greeted the Liberal leader was long rather than loud. The cheering of the Commons is the most varied and expressive music in the world. It is never the same and it always means things. The cheer to-day meant personal loyalty, blended with certain inevitable misgivings, now happily removed."

This is fine analytical work. But I think the writer must have allowed his attention to wander as the debate went on. For he seems to have thrown away several other opportunities that occurred of remarking and interpreting the feeling of the House. To any one gifted with the true Parliamentary frame of mind it was an eventful evening. Mr. ASQUITH had not proceeded very far in his speech before a smile lit up the faces of his followers. It was long rather than loud. Now the smile of the Commons is the most varied and expressive grin in the world. It always means things. The smile that I speak of meant—if you will believe me—intense personal affection wedded to sundry overwhelming sinkings of the heart, subsequently obliterated. But this was not all. As the evening wore on a close observer might have arrived at the conclusion that one of the Irish Members was asleep. His siesta was loud rather than long. But the slumber of the Commons is the most varied and wonderful repose in the world. It means things. On this occasion—you must take it from me—it can only have meant a deep personal devotion, marred by repeated crushing disappointments, eventually assimilated.

While I am in the mood for explaining things there is another matter that I should like to draw attention to. These trifles are so apt to be overlooked. I refer to the behaviour of one of the Labour Members, who, finding that no mention was to be made of the Budget, grunted. The grunt was long rather than loud. Indeed, it was almost inaudible. But I cannot too earnestly emphasise the great truth that the grunt of the Commons is the most varied and expressive utterance in the world. It means things. This one meant—curiously enough—a passionate, almost insensate enthusiasm, tempered by a barren sense of disillusionment, which might have done much to counteract its influence had it not been wafted away by the reconciliation of palpable discrepancies. At least, that is how I read it.

Of course it must be admitted that it is only the old Parliamentary hand that



A CHILD OF EARTH.

Grannie (after seeing an aeroplane for the first time). "AH, WELL, THIS FLYING IN THE AIR IS VERY WONDERFUL, BUT I LIKE OLD ENGLAND BEST, AFTER ALL."

understands these things. Those of us who are without his peculiar instinct are bound to miss a lot. For example, a startling incident occurred towards the close of the debate, when a Member on the Opposition benches was heard to sneeze. It was loud rather than long. But, though you may find it rather hard to believe me, the sneeze of the Commons is the most varied and expressive spasm in the world. It means things. Can it have meant in this case that the hon. Member was sitting in a draught?

"At the end, Grasso leaps on the back of his adversary and brings down the curtain."

Daily Mail.

Why don't they leave all that to the stage hands?

We were surprised to read the following advertisement in the *Buenos Aires Standard*:—

"An English Government requires holiday engagement for six weeks."

Really, it has quite as much as it can take on in England.



WHAT IF THE JIG-SAW EPIDEMIC SPREADS?

INFLUENZA.

I MUST candidly own that occasions I've known
When I rather enjoyed having "flu";
I recall pleasant days when they urged me to laze
And I'd nothing whatever to do
But to watch the flames leap, half awake, half asleep,
Or to smile when my Abra came up
With some nice chicken broth on a dainty white cloth,
On which she would woo me to sup.

But if Abra, poor dear, should herself become queer,
And retire to her bed for a spell,
While the housemaid and cook have both taken their hook
And there's no one to answer the bell,
If you find that you are boots-valet-cook-char-
Nurse-doctor-and-patient in one,
While your agonised head simply hankers for bed,
Then "flu" is the poorest of fun.

If you struggle from town with a tongue that's as brown
And as dry as a bit of old leather,
While your once rosy cheek is as green as a leek
And your knees are both knocking together,
It will make you rejoice when you hear a weak voice
From the bedclothes say, "Soul of my soul!
You are ill?—Well, you can't go to bed—no, you shan't,
Till you've brought up a scuttle of coal."

Then the dogs come and bark for a walk in the Park,
And their eyes are all hopefully bright:
"Take us out for a run! We want cats! We want fun!
We are bored and we spoil for a fight!"

But their tails will drop low when you sadly say, "No!"
And you feel you're a selfish old brute
When their confident trust is all turned to disgust
And their joyous ovations fall mute.

What a chill, like a breath from the cold lips of Death,
Seems to strike through your vitals at eight
When you painfully fare down the cold kitchen stair
To tackle the cold kitchen grate.
There are dampers about which you push in and out,
But your pains end in nothing but smoke,
And you creep back to bed rather more than half dead,
Convinced that the "flu" is no joke.

"A candid critic," says *The Daily News*, "comes forward in *The British Medical Journal* with strong views on the London matriculation English." This critic is then quoted as follows:—

"The student is driven to go to the crammer to be taught the snippets of information which are the stock-in-trade of he who aspires to win the so called competitions."
We can mention one snippet of information which this writer might well have been taught.

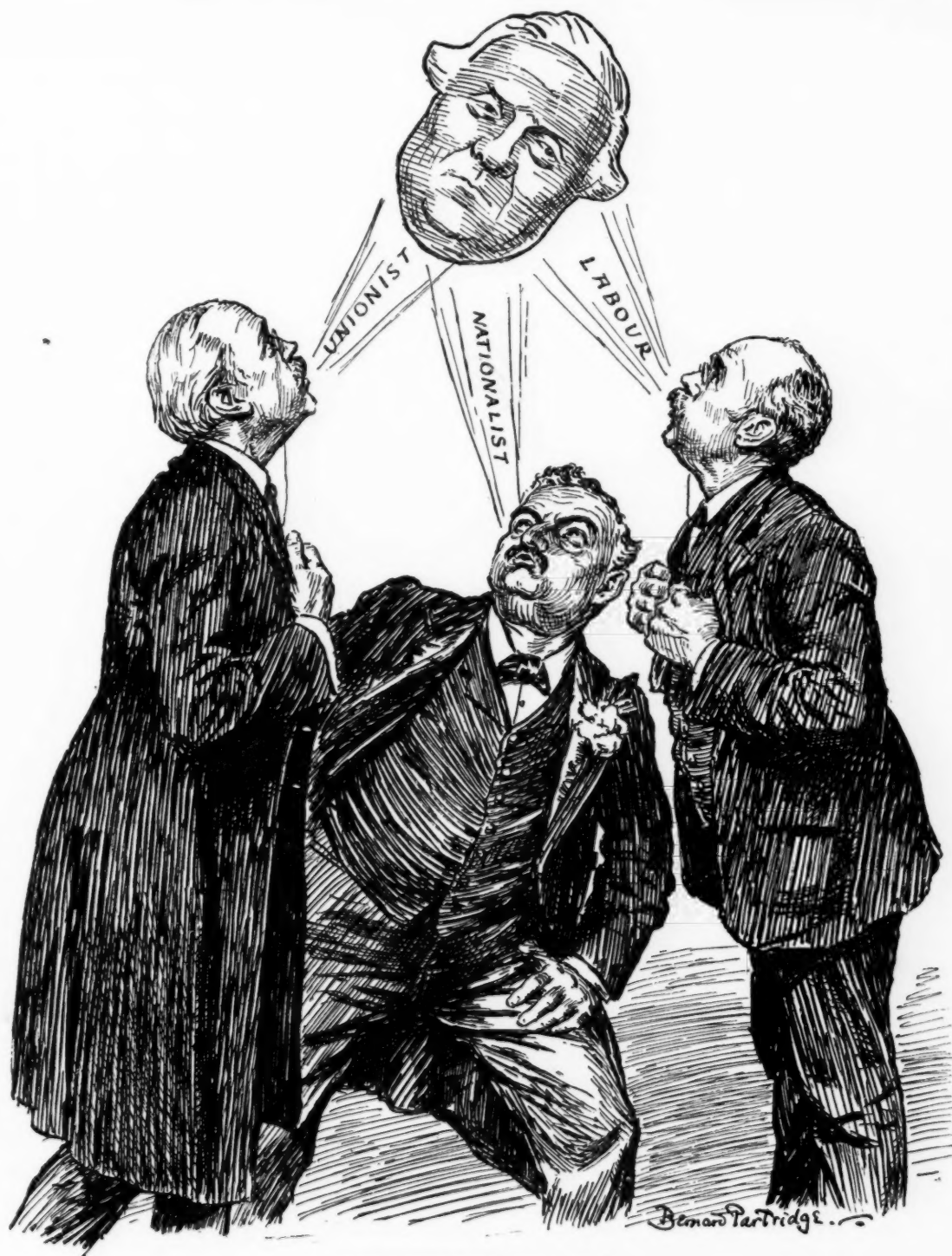
Mrs. ATHERTON on the Englishman, as quoted in

1. *The Daily Telegraph*:

"He is far and away the most interesting type of the genus homo."

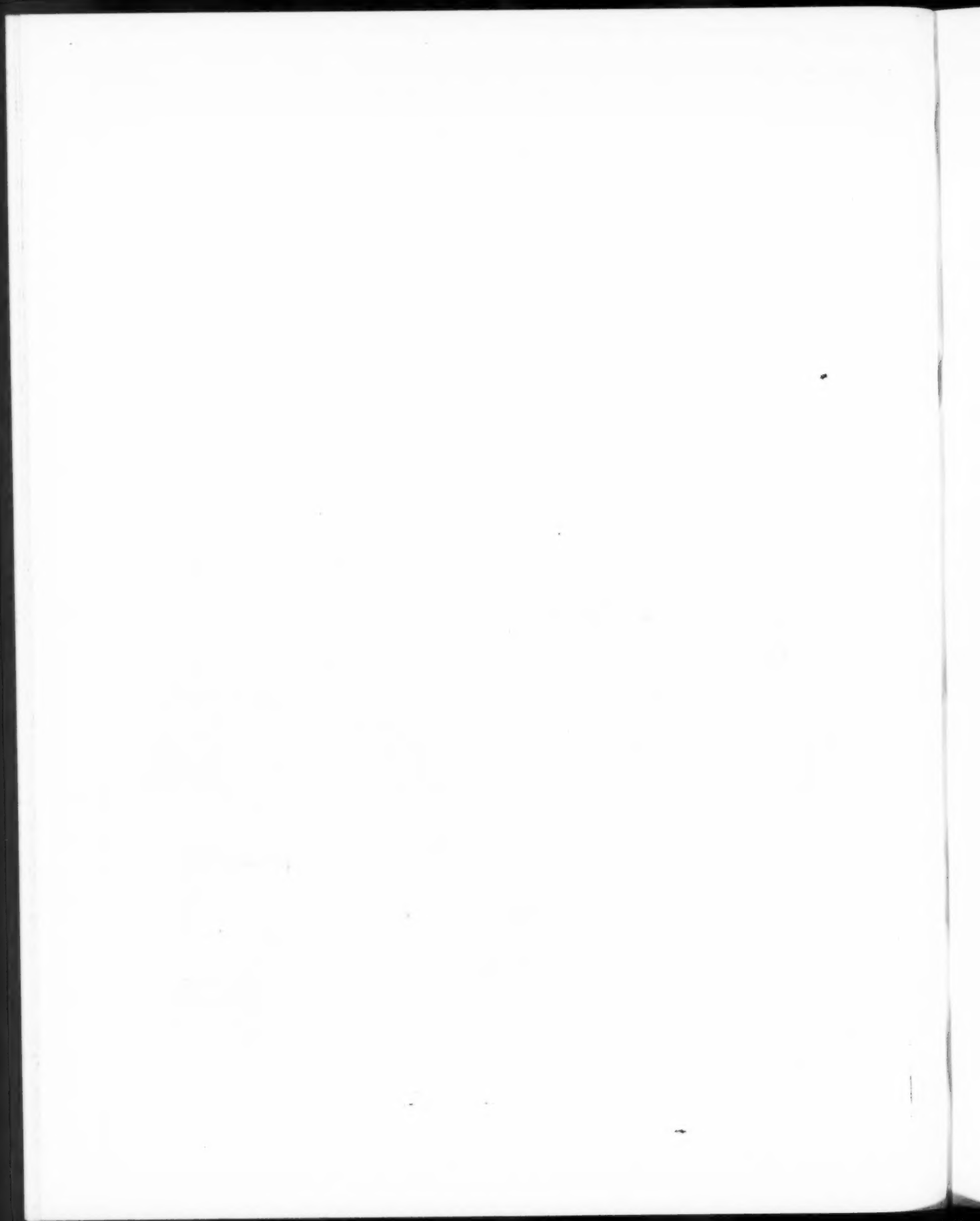
2. *The Daily Mail*:

"He is far and away the most interesting type of the genius of home."
We prefer the more expensive penny version.



KEEPING IT UP.

MR. ARTHUR BALFOUR (*joining in*). "IT GOES AGAINST THE GRAIN—(*puff!*)—BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO LET IT DROP—(*puff!*)—JUST YET."



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, Feb. 28.
—Since the days

When Malachi wore the collar of gold
He won from the proud invader,

Irish Members never been so surprised in their lives. Sitting full of dramatic turns culminating in one in which they figured. Some years ago an eminent French writer was accustomed to contribute to a Paris newspaper a weekly *causerie* that came to be known as his *Lundis*. PREMIER also has his Mondays, not quite so pleasant as SAINT-BEUVE'S. One last week, when declaration of Ministerial policy was followed by mutiny. Another to-day, when it falls to his lot to announce that the tail has successfully wagged the dog; that stubbornly cherished plan of "Budget first" has consequently been abandoned; and that, as soon as urgent need of money for starving Departments is supplied, question of Veto will be pursued to end, howsoever bitter.

Even this surrender did not revive enthusiasm that bubbled over Ministerial Benches before PREMIER, in mood of *Benedick*, admitted that, when he said he would rather die than forego guarantees, he did not think he would live to renounce them.

PRINCE ARTHUR, recovered from apathy of last Monday, made most of opportunity. Chaffed PREMIER in brightest style. Presented entertaining picture of forlorn Cabinet, at issue upon question of House of Lords, striving to reach compromise that would avoid absolute break-up. But were they not men and brethren? Was it for a magnanimous Opposition to take advantage of their dilemma and turn them out on a commonplace motion to take time necessary for voting Supply? Perish the thought!

House chuckled genially at this presentation of the patriot rising above Party considerations.

"PRINCE ARTHUR'S a child in these matters," said the MEMBER FOR SARK.

"But not so infantile as to take a step which, however tempting, would bring upon him responsibility of getting country out of financial mess into which it has been plunged by reference of Budget to the country."

Then came along REDMOND AINÉ, more magisterial in manner than ever, with slight suggestion in pose and arrangement of necktie of recent study of personal appearance of WARWICK THE KINGMAKER. Like PRINCE ARTHUR, situation forces upon him peculiar conditions. Whilst PRINCE ARTHUR whacks

them will resign, he will lead his men into Lobby against Ministerial Resolution now before the House.

LOYD GEORGE gave pledge demanded. Irish Members thereupon retired from House to consider fresh situation. Clock marked a quarter to eight. For three-quarters of an hour they deliberated, finally coming to conclusion that they would show themselves as merciful as they were strong. They would spare the Government yet a while, refraining from executing their leader's threat of voting against motion

to give up all time to the 24th March to Ministerial business. Hurrying back to announce this agreement, possibly to receive need of humble gratitude from a Government saved as it were on the steps of the scaffold, they discovered that a strange thing had happened. Whilst they, jealously locked-in in a Committee-room upstairs, were discussing fate of the Government, lo! it had been settled. PREMIER'S motion had been carried without a division. Irish Members came back to find House in Committee prosaically discussing Resolution authorising Government to borrow money.

Business done.—Another crisis fizzled out. Four weeks' truce proclaimed.

Tuesday.—At single bound Captain COOPER leapt into position of prime favourite in second Parliament of King EDWARD THE SEVENTH. Yesterday unknown, his name is

spoken to-night at many dinner-tables in tone of admiration mellowing into personal affection. Whether achievement result of accident or design, who shall say? It does not matter, since triumph was complete.

Happened in that unexpected manner not unfamiliar in evolution of notable events in the Commons. BANBURY much to the fore lamenting financial chaos consequent on Lords' rejection of Budget. Cannot conceal from himself or the House that "situation is entirely, directly, due to four-and-a-half years of Radical Government." Pondering this paradox, House got into Committee on Supplementary Estimates.



PAKS VOBISCUM; OR, THE LINCOLN HANDICAP.

"We weel not zend ze Büdg-ett to ze Haus of Lörrdz to be zrown out on-ly a-gen!!"
(Mr. J. T. T. Lincoln—born at Paks in Hungary.)

the Government within an inch of their life, carefully observing limit marked by necessity of avoiding immediate Dissolution, REDMOND AINÉ, preserving attitude of austere independence varied by blustering threats, is bound to exert his utmost power to keep Ministry on its legs till it has come to grips with House of Lords on Veto question.

With TIM HEALY sitting watchful on bench below, he dare not openly display complete complacency towards Government. So he finishes up with threat that unless categorical pledge is forthcoming that, if promised Veto Resolution be rejected by Lords, PREMIER will go to CROWN asking for guarantees, and failing



PLYMOUTH Ho!!

"When I first put this uniform on."
(Mr. C. E. Mallet, the new Financial Secretary to the War Office.)

At this stage COOPER emerged from obscurity. Interposing, he claimed indulgence for delivery of his maiden speech. Incidentally he mentioned the pleasing personal fact that he is the youngest Irish Member in the House.

Then there was a pause, COOPER visibly growing more aged. Committee sat silent awaiting the oration. *A propos* of nothing, COOPER, drawing himself together, asked somebody "What steps are being taken to render the men who got the land which is being acquired efficient cultivators?"

Another pause, quite long enough for anyone who really knew to answer this riddle. The gallant Captain stood looking round at the Committee. The Committee sat looking at the Captain. Being another half-minute older, he resolved to make clean breast of business. Fact was, he explained, he had prepared a most elaborate speech on work of Congested Districts Board.

"I filled it," he said, "with quotations from Irish papers and from the CHIEF SECRETARY'S speeches. But I was told the vote would not be taken to-day, so I left the speech on my dressing-room table."

Amid murmur of generous sympathy,

warmer by reason of under-current of satisfaction at escape, gallant and youthful Captain, manfully controlling his emotion, resumed his seat.

"If," said the SPEAKER when, progress being reported, he heard of the incident, "that method of dealing with a speech were more common, we should have shorter sessions and more work to show for them."

St. AUGUSTINE did a really nice thing. Retiring to the Library and, with that delicate touch that indicates fine nature, selecting a sheet of black-edged paper, he wrote a note to COOPER saying how much he would appreciate opportunity of reading the speech if it were found intact on the dressing-table on the Captain's return to his room.

Episode had such effect on course of events that by a quarter to eight the whole of business set down was accomplished and House adjourned in time for dinner and the conversation alluded to.

Business done.—Quite a lot.

Thursday.—DUDLEY WARD, making first appearance as Treasurer of the Household, stood at Bar, bearer of a message from the KING. Looked very well in his uniform, carrying in right hand the wand of ancient office. Called upon by the SPEAKER, he with due obeisance advanced to Table, with clear voice pronounced His MAJESTY'S satisfaction at the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

This sufficiently commonplace. Crisis arrives when, message delivered, Mercury withdraws. Etiquette forbids the turning of the back on the SPEAKER. In present strained relations of two Houses, any breach would be exceptionally resented. Must retire backwards.

Interest of House in this performance always breathless. Members on both sides look on as if fate of Empire depended on successful accomplishment of manœuvre. A few paces showed that DUDLEY WARD was all right. As he reached first appointed halting-place and bowed low to Chair, ringing cheer burst forth, renewed as he unfalteringly made his way backward as far as the Bar.

Here ordeal is usually completed. Messenger turns about and walks forth face foremost. Not so DUDLEY WARD. Encouraged by the cheers, he continued his backward march, shouldering his way through the appalled crowd standing at the Bar, backing into the swinging glass doors, and so amid ringing cheers vanished.

Business done.—Transvaal War Loan Bill passed through Committee.



CHAMPION BACKWARDS-WALKER OF THE WORLD.
(Hon. Dudley Ward, Treasurer of the Household.)

MORE JUSTICE.

(From "The Kensington Herald.")

WE regret to state that the residence of Mr. JOHN GALSWORTHY, the famous dramatist, in Addison Road, was broken into by burglars on Thursday evening while the whole household were at the Duke of York's Theatre. The thieves were returning for one more load of valuables when Mr. GALSWORTHY drove up in a cab just in time to intercept them. What then happened we are enabled to relate in the words of the chief of the burglars, who called at our office eager to acquaint us with so remarkable an experience.

"Pardon me," Mr. GALSWORTHY says to me, "but do you know what you're doing?"

"Perfectly," says I, thinking it best to brazen it out; "we're burgling your house."

"But that's a very anti-social thing to do," says he.

"It's our livelihood," says I. "You write books and plays and we rob."

"Come in," he says, "and talk it over."

"Right O," I says, tipping my mates



Furious M.F.H. "DID YOU TREAD ON THAT HOUND, SIR?"

Urban Sportsman. "ME? WHY, I HAVEN'T BEEN OFF MY HORSE ALL DAY."

the wink to lie low; and we sits down comfortable by the fire.

"You're back early," says I.

"Yes," says he; 'I had a headache and had to come away. I don't regret it now that I have the opportunity of studying you at first hand;' and he puts up his eyeglass and looks at me all over.

"Well," I says, 'what about it?'

"What about what?" he asks.

"This burglary," I says; 'how does it strike you?'

"Oh, that," says he. 'I am considering it. Of course I look upon you merely as a victim of society; I can't blame you personally. Besides, you no doubt hate being poor, and you know my pity for anyone who is not rich. What I was thinking about was my property. Do you intend to return it? I don't wish to influence you: I doubt if I have the right; but I should like to know what you propose to do?'

"Well," said I, 'I always used to hear that finding's keeping.'

"True," he said. 'A saying drawn from our old barbarism. But how did you come to select this house?'

"Well," I says, 'I happened to have nothing to do this afternoon, so I dropped into a matinée of your play, and I says to myself, "This is the man

for me. Even if he catches me he won't put me into jug." And that's the long and short of it. Here we are.'

"This made him sit up; and he said nothing for ever so long.

"Well, time was getting on, and at any moment the others might come in without any of his nice ideas, and so I got up.

"I'm very sorry," I said, 'but I must say good night. I've a lot of hard work to do before I get to bed. Have you anything more to say to me?'

"No," he said, 'I'm still thinking.' And with that I left him, and I've never seen him since."

THE LESSER CELANDINE.

(ONCE MORE.)

THERE is a flower, the lesser celandine,
That may appeal to poets by its looks,
Its innocence, simplicity; in fine,
By all the qualities we like in books;

That may, as WORDSWORTH gazes on its face,
Inspire his mind to fancies sweet and rare,
And cause the child to check his happy race
And pick a posy for his nurse's hair.

But, after all, there's something else besides

A flower's appearance: there's its root as well;
And this the lesser celandine provides
In such profusion as I wince to tell.

Once let it get possession of the soil,
And surely is your garden wilder-
nessed;
Not all your hirelings' grim and costly
toil

Can ever overtake and kill the pest.

Mine's full of it. Whichever way I send
My fearful glance it rests upon this
blight.

Expensive beds are choked with it; no
end
Of care and thought obliterated quite.

The lesser celandine a joy, forsooth!
Not if I know it! This is what I say,
'Tis only by ignoring half the truth
That WORDSWORTH won the place he
holds to-day.

"Fane was bowled at 93, and one run later Woolley caught Hobbs. Bird stayed until 188, when he was run out by Leveson-Gower. Hobbs knocked off the remaining runs."—*Cork Evening Echo*.

He was then stumped by RHODES, and the great match was over.

AT THE PLAY.

"MISALLIANCE."

"TALK, talk, talk," says the revolting young lady in Mr. SHAW's play, after silently assisting at a protracted symposium on just any subject that occurred to anybody; "talk, talk, talk, and nothing ever happens." I was with her there, very heartily, for she reflected, with great accuracy, my own indignation; but these favourable sentiments were modified when she seized the occasion of a general dispersal of the



LOVE-MAKING (SHAWIAN STYLE).

Hyppatia Tarleton (Miss MIRIAM LEWES) to *Joseph Percival* (Mr. CHARLES BRYANT). "Handsome man, chase me in the heather!"

company to talk at an appalling length on her own account. Nobody, of course, can ever be angry with Mr. SHAW, because he is such a dear, ingenuous child, opening large eyes on the world with an innocence apparently unqualified by experience of things as they actually are. But the trouble is that, like a spoiled child, he has got into the habit of taking himself too seriously. He sees himself as an Institution, and, therefore, like all established things, a fit subject for ridicule and burlesque. I don't so much mind his making merry with the Bible, for instance, because that kind of bad taste defeats itself; but I do object to his treatment of himself as an equally recognised Institution.

I never found out what the title of his new play, *Misalliance*, referred to. I think it must have been the unholy wedlock which Mr. SHAW had arranged between mere dialogue and the stage. Still, I got a good deal of fun out of the farcical third Act, though here Mr. SHAW committed an unforgivable error

in introducing a situation which closely recalled a recent tragedy in actual life.

The author owed much to the universal excellence of the performance, in which nearly everybody said the most improbable things with a great air of probability. Mr. LOWNE was particularly happy in his easy transmission of the sort of paradoxical humour which has long enjoyed the hallowed sanction of antiquity; and Miss FLORENCE HAYDON was admirable, as ever, with her corrective bathos.

THE TRIPLE BILL.

I confess that I prefer Mr. BARRIE in his moods of fanciful sentiment. The whimsical habit of thought which is the great charm of his lighter manner seems to produce a sense of insecurity when he deals with terrible things. Neither the head nor the heart of me could accept the tragic element in *Old Friends*. The reformed drunkard was sound enough, but his young daughter, the confirmed dipsomaniac, was (apart from all question of physiological science) unbelievable, and so was the mother, with her vindictive cruelty to the father who, as the supposed cause of their child's hereditary taint, has to submit to a bitter tirade on the subject before the child's very face. Nor could the old maxim, here repeated, to the effect that men often imagine they have conquered their vices when it is really their vices that have grown tired of them and left them, have ever conceivably been applied to the vice of alcoholism. A more trivial fault was the insistence with which the author, by aid of irony and other suggestions, foreshadowed the retribution of the gods. It made the play (for all its brevity) drag a little in the scene between the father (Mr. SYDNEY VALENTINE) and the rather stagey parson (Mr. HUBERT HARBEN). There were moments of effectiveness (for which no small credit was due to the dim light); but the pity and terror of it all were never purifying, because one's intellect remained unconvinced. I don't really think it was worth while to have done it.

On the other hand, *The Twelve-Pound Look*, a half-farcical comedy by the same Mr. BARRIE, was wholly delightful, and showed the author in his happiest vein of genial cynicism. Also it gave Miss LENA ASHWELL her first decent chance in the Repertory series, and she used it in the quiet way which suits her manner and her voice so much the best, if she would only believe it. Mr. GWENY was a superb Sir 'Arry, gorgeous in his contented Philistinism, though, perhaps excusably, he a little overplayed the part. The only reflection that I venture to pass upon this charming sketch is that, while hinting that the second wife may one day seek the same relief

as the first, Mr. BARRIE has not thought of providing her with a similar motive. The two women have nothing in common except the fact that they have married the same man. The one had no fear of him, but simply could not tolerate the tedious banalities of life with a too-successful man. The other shows no sign of this form of annoyance, but is merely cowed by her husband's overbearing egoism. If she ever goes type-writing on her own, it will be with a different motive for escape, and I think the motive should have been the same. But I don't much mind how her face is going to get "the twelve-pound-look," the hunger for stenography-with-freedom, because the first wife, in the course of explaining how she got her own twelve-pound-look, afforded me just as much mirth as I was capable of accommodating.

Sandwiched between the two BARRIES was GEORGE MEREDITH's "unfinished



LOVE-MAKING (MEREDITHIAN STYLE).

Astraea . . . Miss FAY DAVIS.
Arden . . . Mr. CHARLES MAUDE.

comedy," *The Sentimentalists*. The formal yew-hedged garden and the Early-Victorian costumes were in keeping with the deliciously pedantic flavour of the dialogue. (I except from my approval the costume of *Professor Spiral*, which was more suited to a mature Corinthian buck than a connoisseur in rhetoric.) As in Mr. SHAW's play, it was "talk" and nothing "happened": but such talk; such quality of phrase; a wit so fine; a gallantry so lyric! In the first scene, where the humour was less elusive, there was some very pretty jesting and exchange of preciosities over the Professor's homily on the charms of the young widow *Astraea*. Here, too, Miss JERROLD, as the over-married *Lyra*, made a most piquant figure, and Mr. DENNIS EADIE, as *Uncle Homecare*, interpreted his part with a nice appreciation of its humour. The dialogue of the second scene was not so seizable, partly because its form—blank verse, and of great distinction—did not make for clearness; in part because the senti-

ment moved on a higher plane, in an atmosphere more rarefied; in part, too, because Miss FAY DAVIS (welcome back to the stage) rather hurried her words. It must be added regretfully that with all her charm she was not quite in the picture. Mr. CHARLES MAUDE, as her lover Arden, brought to the delivery of his lines a very noble quality of voice and expression.

Altogether, I have to thank Mr. FROHMAN for a most sporting evening. If the feelings of some of us were harrowed by *Old Friends*, and our intellects a little strained by *The Sentimentalists*, at least *The Twelve-Pound Look* left a final smile on our happy faces; and I for one have pleasure in putting "Received with Many Thanks" to the last two items of *The Triple Bill*.
O. S.

SEASONABLE STARVATION.

(With acknowledgments to the *Feminine Press*.)

At this season, of course, we are all studiously careful to keep "the larder lean, and clean From fat of veals and sheep," as dear old HERRICK—how sweetly *lavendery* the name is—so quaintly puts it. Asceticism has invaded even the smartest of the smart restaurants, and to such a length is principle carried in the fashionable world that I know of one *grande dame* who will not even allow her Pekingese anything but vegetarian biscuits between Shrovetide and Easter.

Fasting, then, is *de rigueur*, and now that the matutinal rasher would lie heavy on the consciences of her guests the up-to-date hostess is naturally looking out for little *plats* sufficiently mortifying to the flesh, yet containing enough nourishment to prevent actual collapse. For such I have copied out a few tasteful recipes, and which will be well within the means of the most thrifty.

COTELETTE CHANTECLER.—Take a pint of shrimps. Trim off their whiskers and slap till tender. Break a dozen golden eggs, G.W.R. brand, into a saucepan, and add a piece of butter the size of a cocoa-nut. Whisk with a whisker. Dump in a pound of flour. Stir all together. Slice with a sharp niblick, fry a nice brown, and score heavily. Sufficient for one ascetic.

POULET LLOYD GEORGE.—Bone a chicken from the nearest hen-roost. Stew till tender in dry champagne, taking care to skim off the increment every time it appears. Set aside the liquor—the flesh, of course, must not be eaten. Add two quarts of calipee and twelve large mashed potatoes. Now have ready some nice forcemeat. Bake in a fast oven, and stuff well. (For two persons take double quantities of each ingredient.)



THE EDUCATIONAL EQUIPMENT OF OUR GIRLS.

Schoolmistress. "WELL, ELIZA, WHAT DID YOUR MOTHER SAY YOU WERE TO DO WHEN YOU LEFT SCHOOL?"

Eliza. "PLEASE, MISTRESS, MUVER SAYS I KIN STAY AT 'OME FOR A FEW WEEKS AN' MOIND THE BIBY FER PRACTICE AN' THEN I'LL BE FIT TO GO INTO A COUNTESS'S FAMILY."

DUKE HUMPHREY'S DUMPLINGS.—(A very favourite fast dish with children.) Take three pounds of the stodgy part of a cod. Make some light pastry, remembering that dripping is taboo. Put in the cod and any vegetables and nuts left over from yesterday's dinner. Add mace, maize, mint, cayenne, cinnamon, cochineal, mustard and angelica to taste. Plug well. Roll round and round and round, and bake till it blunts a sharp fork. This quantity will do for one small child.

Those who experience any feeling of faintness after this *maigre* diet should

try an oyster *mousse*, or sip a pint of clear turtle between breakfast and lunch.

At the Hotel Fitz, by the way, a special nine-course Lenten dinner for rigid self-disciplinarians is now served in the Pompadour Hall at a guinea a head. An interesting novelty is the introduction of *paon de luxe à la Financière* in place of the ordinary *relève*. As the peacock is now, ecclesiastically considered, not fowl, but fish, even those possessing the most super-sensitive consciences may partake of it without scruple.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

THE easiest way to criticise anything is to condemn it because it is not something else. It would not be difficult, for instance, to point out by how much *The Ball and the Cross* (WELLS GARDNER, DARTON) fails to be this, that and the other which its author, G. K. CHESTERTON, never intended it to be. For myself, I should have enjoyed reading it more had it been pure romance, devoid of symbolism; but Mr. CHESTERTON would not have enjoyed writing it so much, and it is his book. I don't think he can ever have enjoyed himself so much as on this occasion; towards the end, in fact, he has quite carried himself away. For three-quarters of the book I followed him with breathless eagerness—for the last quarter I had to confess that I was lost; but I was comforted by the feeling that probably he was lost too. *The Ball and the Cross*, a splendid mixture of Mr. CHESTERTON'S two enthusiasms, fighting and religion, tells of the duel between an Atheist and a Roman Catholic, and of their wanderings in search of a quiet spot in which to finish their battle. Their adventures are delightful, until they find themselves in an asylum, when, as I have said, Mr. CHESTERTON appears to lose his grasp of the story. At one moment, indeed, I had an uneasy suspicion that he was working off on me some of his well-known scorn of the prison system and the indeterminate sentence. I hope he wasn't.

To talk about the invasion of London as a dreadful possibility of the future is absurd. We are always being invaded, and we do not mind in the least. Every day a determined young conqueror or two arrives at Euston or Charing Cross lusting for a career, bent upon subduing. Prepared to overcome every obstacle, they are all, as was *David Logan*, confronted by one least dreamt of but most insuperable. London offers no obstacle for them to overcome. There is no resistance; the Londoner is polite and apathetic. I do not remember seeing this point made before in fiction. The attitude of the about-to-be-conquered, when it is mentioned, usually oscillates between violent opposition and abject admiration; when not mentioned, I suspect it of being one of complete indifference, for heroes who condescend to business careers are generally inhuman, nearly always dull, hardly ever romantic. *David Logan* has none of these faults. He has no unfair start in his race for greatness, his progress never fails to provide amusement, and he has three very probable but quite unprosaic encounters with the Sex. You will dislike him personally, for he is stolid and mean. That was why he got on, and one does not like people who get on,

at any rate like that. But, if you have any affection for London, you will like his history. Nothing much ever happens in either, but there is about both a pervading air of movement and adventure. It is a pity that either the author, MARK ALLERTON, or the publishers, Messrs. METHUEN, could not have hit on a title less inane than *Such and Such Things* for so pleasant a book.

Personally, were I on a secret mission to Peking, and surrounded by rivals anxious to steal my plans, I think that, if a strange lady fainted attractively on my verandah, I should at once take steps to change my hotel. Almost certainly, I should not permit myself to sit in the dark in company with this same lady and an unlocked despatch-box. If *Peter Kerr* had followed these simple rules he would have succeeded better over the affair of the Chinese Railway Concessions. But on the other hand, *The Human Cobweb* (MACMILLAN) might never have been written; and I should have been genuinely sorry about that. The *Cobweb* that Mr. PUTNAM WEALE has spun is by no means the slender affair that its title suggests; on the contrary, it is a novel almost, as regards size, in the antique manner, and full throughout of the most interesting and entertaining matter. Frankly speaking, I found the English chapters sometimes a little tedious, but they are few, and once Mr. PUTNAM WEALE lands his hero in China, amid the cosmopolitan crowd of diplomats and concession-hunters which he himself obviously knows at first hand, then the thing fairly sparkles. Indeed, I think I have never read a story of which the local colour was more vividly presented; so good is this that the reader emerges as from an actual "week-end in picturesque Peking" for six shillings. It should certainly stimulate the tourist traffic to so fascinating a spot. The DALAI LAMA has clearly been favoured with an advance copy.



THE ROMANCE OF WAR.

Sceptical Youth. "BUT YOU DON'T MEAN TO SAY THERE ARE LIONS IN THE CRUEVA?"

Old Warrior. "MY BOY, I BE A-TALKING O' FIFTY YEAR AND MORE AGO!"

"GERMAN GENTLEMAN desires HOME in best English (Christian) family in London, N.W."—*Morning Post*.

There are so many good families in the North-West that one cannot lightly fix upon the best. There's that family in Mai la Vale, of course . . . or that large one in Finchley Road . . . or— Well, it's a difficult question.

"£12, Organ, knee swells & stops."—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*. That's the worst of these cheap organs with their stiff pedals.

NEW MOTTO FOR THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."—*Actual infelix angusto limite Mondì.*